



April 2019

The Vision

News and updates from and about the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services
Eric T. Clark, Commissioner

From the Commissioner

Effective April 1st -- six years following the intake moratorium on the cash assistance available under the Kinship Care Program -- another phase of the new relative/fictive kin caregiver service array is lifting, a new child specific foster home. Relative and fictive kin caregivers who accept a child through placement facilitated by DCBS will now have a fuller menu of options from which to choose. The full disclosure process to be delivered by DCBS protection and permanency staff, and the new options menu, will empower the kin caregiver to make the best selections concerning the child's custody, services, and

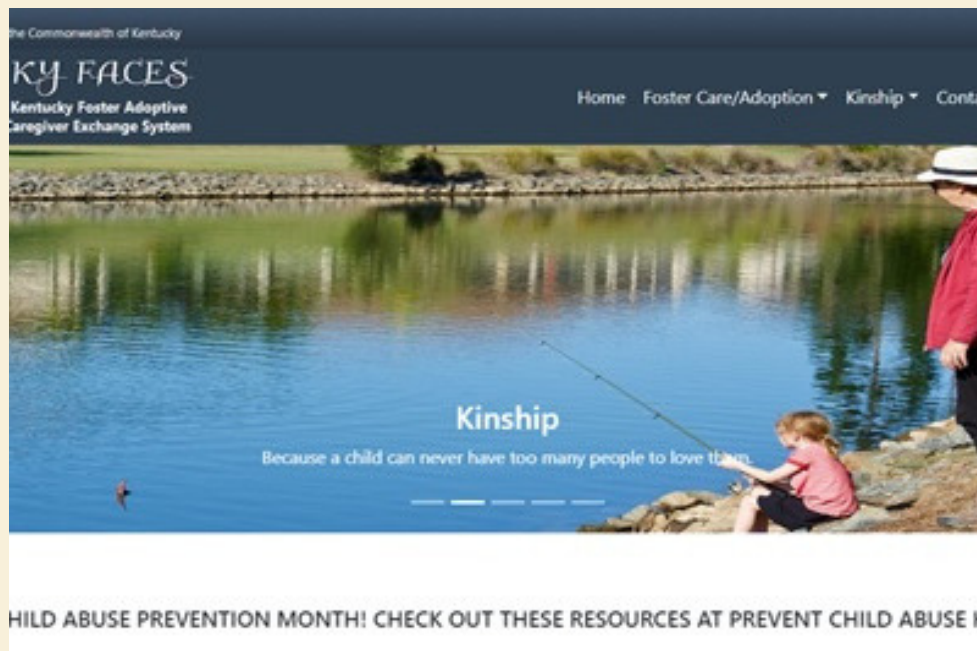
permanency if a child cannot be reunified with the child's home of origin. The selection process will allow for preferences of the kin caregiver and considerations of the child's needs.

An unprecedented opportunity has been given to DCBS to better support the maintenance of families and reduced trauma to a child who needs to be removed from the child's home of origin. The opportunity has been supported through the overall child welfare transformation efforts as charged by Governor Bevin and the First Lady, various legislative actions of the Kentucky General Assembly, and ongoing collaborative efforts with the courts. The service array, as proposed in DCBS administrative regulation and included in House Bill 2 enacted during the 2019 Regular Session, was informed by focus groups and surveys conducted in 2018, inputs from national experts, and state-to-state consultations. More is to come with the anticipated federal award of Federal Fiscal Year 2019 Kinship Navigator Grant funds, Kentucky's early implementation of the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018, and possible exercising of additional state options under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act.

The new service array touches upon every major program area administered by DCBS, including access to K-TAP, Medicaid, child care assistance, and referral to grandparent support groups. For instance, a kin caregiver may accept custody of the child and decide to apply for public assistance programs available to the child, or a kin caregiver may decide to apply as a new child specific foster home or basis foster home. Each DCBS staff person has a role in implementation of this new service array. I call upon you to support these efforts that show our commitment to Kentucky's families and children.

Thank you for your service to Kentucky's families and children.

Continue to look for more on the DCBS Facebook page, Twitter, and KY FACES web portal.



Adult Services

- DCBS and the Department for Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) are collaborating to ensure alignment of processes for guardianship petitions. Revisions of DCBS processes are anticipated concurrent with the effective date of a regulatory amendment by DAIL. DCBS continues to participate with the Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders (WINGS) group, and DCBS staff serves as the chair on the WINGS-Education and Outreach subcommittee.
- DCBS maintains efforts with the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS) for submission of Kentucky data and the Virginia Tech-Center for Gerontology regarding the intersection of opioids and elder maltreatment. DCBS submitted the 2018 Adult Protective Services data to NAMRS on Feb 26. Data were recently submitted to Virginia Tech to begin the study.
- DCBS, the Ombudsman's Office, and the Office of Legal Services continue to partner to improve administrative hearing and final order processes for the Caregiver Misconduct Registry and the criteria for Adult Protective Services intake and substantiations. A possible regulatory amendment to 922 KAR 5:070 governing Adult Protective Services is under exploration and development.

Child Care

- The W.K. Kellogg grant for expanding home-based childcare in Kentucky is moving towards the implementation phase. Starting April 1, regional pilot programs will begin the implementation phase of recruitment and putting details in place to move forward in increasing the quantity and quality of home-based providers. DCBS is working diligently with technical assistance services and new resources to help regional pilots begin with a strong start.
- As of March 20, 2019, 40,240 child care staff member background checks have been initiated through the National Background Check Program.
- The Kentucky All STARS Program has maintained 48% of participating programs at a high quality All STARS rating level (3-5). All STARS staff made March's focus about consistent statewide communications and conducted various conference calls around work processes and barriers in different parts of the state. All STARS has planned an all-staff meeting for April 2019.
- The DCBS-Division of Child Care continues to dedicate staffing resources to the Preschool Development Grant activities as administered by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood.
- The Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC) meets quarterly to give child care providers and advocates throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky the opportunity to advise DCBS on matters that affect the operations, funding, licensing, and certification of child care. Meetings are open to the public. The next meeting will be held at Bluegrass Community Action in Frankfort on April 25 from 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 922 KAR 2:160&E, governing the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), were filed December 1 effecting reimbursement rate increases for child care providers among other policy initiatives supported by new federal discretionary funding. New CCAP reimbursement rates were available on Dec. 1. Effective June 28, new technical eligibility rules have been added to include applicants who are enrolled full-time in a trade school, college, university, or GED program or participating in the SNAP Employment and Training Program, support educational and training pursuits of low-income parents. Public comments were received on the proposed administrative regulation. Agency response to comments and an amended-after-comments version of the administrative regulation were filed on March 15, 2019. The administrative regulations will undergo their first legislative committee review in April.



Legislative Update

- March 28 was the final day of the 2019 Regular Session. During session, DCBS reviewed 35 pieces of unique legislation directly affecting the department, not counting committee substitutes and amendments. The department's legislative initiatives, including House Bill 158, were passed. Background checks for employees of child-caring facilities had an emergency clause attached rendering it effective upon passage into law; the rest of the passed legislation will become effective at the end of June 2019. DCBS administrative regulations will be amended as necessary to comply with these pieces of legislation.
- Thank you to everyone who contributed to DCBS' outstanding bill reviews. The bill reviews really did make a difference in whether legislation was amended, passed, or saw no movement.



Personnel and Operations

- DCBS Staff attended the Media Alert for the Apprenticeship program conducted by the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. It was noted that DCBS was the first agency to register an apprenticeship program.
- Reclassification of the Internal Policy Analyst series is nearing completion.
- DCBS staff escorted a mentee from the Governor's Minority Management Training Program (GMMTP) on a tour of the Capitol and provided insight on the legislative process.

Self-Care Corner

Self-care is a vital but often overlooked part of professional wellness. This feature offers self-care tips for staff to boost their mood, confidence and self-esteem.

The Beauty of Good Sleep

Sleep is vital to our well-being -- as important as a good diet and proper physical activity. Good sleep can especially help you to manage stress and make better decisions. Here are some tips from the National Sleep Foundation for getting your best rest so you can tackle busy days helping others.

- Make sleep a priority.
- Make your room a sleep haven. Keep it cool, quiet and dark. If you need to, get blackout curtains. Let in bright light in the morning to signal your body to wake up.
- No pills, vitamins or drinks can replace good sleep. Consuming caffeine close to bedtime can hurt your sleep, so avoid coffee, tea, soda and chocolate late in the day so you can get to sleep at night.
- Establish a bed and wake-time and stick to it, coming as close as you can even on the weekends. A consistent sleep schedule will help you feel less tired since it allows your body to get in sync with its natural patterns. You will find that it's easier to fall asleep at bedtime with this type of routine.
- Don't eat, drink, or exercise within a few hours of your bedtime. Don't leave your work for the last minute. Try to avoid the TV, computer and phone for at least an hour before you go to bed. Stick to quiet, calm activities, and you'll fall asleep much more easily.
- If you do the same things every night before you go to sleep, you teach your body the signals that it's time for bed. Try taking a bath or shower (this will leave you extra time in the morning), or reading a book.

Public Assistance



- The DCBS-Division of Family Support is in the final stages of securing SNAP EBT Point of Sale devices to be used at the Farmer's Markets throughout the state. This will allow SNAP recipients to use benefits to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables. Arranging this option for Kentucky's SNAP customers is consistent with USDA's push for healthier uses of SNAP Benefits.
- DCBS has approved extension of the crisis component of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). The program now runs through April 30, 2019. This decision was based on the reality that coldest days of this winter came later in the season, resulting in energy bills for those cold spells arriving closer to spring. The LIHEAP crisis component is designed to assist individuals experiencing a home-heating crises. The program is available to those who are at or below 130% of the federal poverty limit and is delivered by Kentucky's 23 community action agencies as subcontractors of Community Action Kentucky, Inc. To date, LIHEAP has provided nearly \$23 million in energy assistance this fiscal year.
- DCBS has worked closely with Deloitte Digital on the Human Centered Design Concept for SNAP Employment and Training Program (E&T) participants. Human Centered Design Concept is an approach to solving complex non-linear problems by gaining empathy for clients and translating insights into viable solutions while integrating digital experiences. The process starts an immersive generative ethnographic-style of research, incorporating elements of social science geared towards feasible solutions. The design methodology provides various perspectives; ranging from individual to system-wide beliefs. This concept will identify the needs, opportunities, problem areas, motivations, and behaviors of the people that engage with the SNAP E&T program.
- The DCBS Claims Section has been working on intercepts throughout the tax season. This occurs when an individual has become delinquent on a claim and is due to receive either a federal or state tax refund. Through the Claims Section, refunds are intercepted and used as payment toward delinquent claims. If DCBS was unable to intercept state and/or federal tax refunds or other federal payments, there would be many claims that would never be paid, resulting in permanent loss to the agency. Federal and state intercepts accounted for over \$3 million last year of the \$4.2 million claims payments by clients.
- Public comments were received on 921 KAR 2:055, Hearings and appeals. In response to comment, the administrative regulation was further amended to correct statutory references and clarify terms relating to hearings and appeals, as recommended by the Office of Legal Services. This administrative regulation; 921 KAR 3:060&E, Administrative disqualification hearings and appeals; and 921 KAR 3:070&E, Fair hearings, underwent their first legislative committee review on March 11, 2019. The purpose of the amendments is to make administrative hearing processes for public assistance programs more expedient through the elimination of the optional Appeal Board for Public Assistance. The regulatory amendments are also necessary to address findings from the U.S. Food and Nutrition Service. These administrative regulations will undergo their second and final legislative committee review in April or, if the committee does not meet, will automatically become effective in early May.
- An amendment to 921 KAR 2:015 was filed as an emergency on Dec. 28, 2018, to increase the standard of need in the State Supplemental Program to reflect the 2.8% cost of living adjustment to be implemented in calendar year 2019 by the Social Security Administration for Supplemental Security Income recipients. Public comment was received from Kentucky Division of Protection and Advocacy, and an agency response is currently being drafted to be filed by April 15, 2019.

Child Welfare Transformation

- The first Child Welfare Transformation regional meetings with supervisors, service region leadership and front line staff will conclude in April with the Eastern Mountain Service Region. The other eight regions were concluded in February.
- The Child Welfare Transformation workgroups continued to meet through March. DCBS continues to receive the support and expertise of Casey Family Programs in these efforts. As part of the group's ongoing support to DCBS and the Child Welfare Transformation, Casey Family Programs' Executive Vice President plans to meet with DCBS leadership, the Governor, and First Lady in April.



From the Workforce Supports Workgroup

- The Culture of Safety implementation continued in March with the critical incident review training. Participants included the regional child fatality/near fatality review staff, leadership staff the Division of Protection and Permanency and the Division of Service Regions, and the Service Region Administrators.
- The next meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2019.

From the Prevention Supports Workgroup

- Chapin Hall consultants continue to provide support. New stakeholders have also been added to the workgroup to include sister agencies and outside partners.
- Two subcommittees were formed. The data subcommittee will assist in identifying the population of candidates for prevention services. The evidenced-based practice subcommittee will identify current programming available, which is anticipated to fulfill prevention services requirements under Title IV-E of the Social Security Act, as amended by the Family First Prevention Services Act of 2018 (FFPSA), to leverage federal reimbursement for said services.
- DCBS has secured resources through Casey Family Programs to process map prevention services.
- A readiness assessment was developed by Chapin Hall and the Public Consulting Group and distributed to providers to determine their readiness to begin providing services under FFPSA, de-coupling, and identify gaps. There were over 70 responses received. Analysis of the data is underway.
- The next meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2019.

From the Relative Placement Supports Workgroup

- Administrative regulations to outline the enhanced service array, legal options, and full disclosure (of options) for relative/fictive kin caregivers were filed December 13, 2018, and received public comment. Agency response to comments and amended-after-comment versions of two administrative regulations were filed on March 15. The administrative regulations are scheduled to go before the first legislative oversight committee in April.
- DCBS submitted the state's application for Federal Fiscal Year 2019 Kinship Navigator Grant funds on March 14. This application will support a communications plan through the Eastern Kentucky University-University Training Consortium; KY-KINS, a pilot program offering peer-to-peer supports to kin caregivers; and call services supports.
- The new child specific foster home type is scheduled for implementation beginning April 1. This is the second phase of the multi-phased project to provide an enhanced service array to relative and fictive kin caregivers that better matches the state's high value of said placements. Intensive face-to-face training have been provided to recruitment and certification staff statewide throughout March. New and revised standards of practice (SOP) will be issued by April 1. Additional staff training will roll-out in May and June through funding provided under the Federal Fiscal Year 2018 Kinship Navigator Grant.
- DCBS contributed to House Bill 2 of the 2019 Regular Session, which will codify the new relative/fictive kin caregiver service array into statute and add an evaluative reporting requirement.
- As of March 18, 16,574 payments had been issued as a result of the D.O. v. Glisson ruling since February 2018, totaling \$14.3 million.
- The next meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2019.

Child Welfare Transformation

From the Fiscal Modernization Workgroup

- The House Bill 1 study group met on March 1, 2019, and March 22, 2019. Relevant literature was reviewed, and an expert panel discussion was held. The group is slated to hold four more meetings between April 11th and July 1st, the due date for the group's recommendations. The meetings are facilitated by Chapin Hall. Casey Family Programs is providing additional expertise with process mapping to aid in the group's deliberations of possible areas of the foster care continuum that could be privatized further.
- DCBS continues to work with the Department for Medicaid Services regarding language for the State Fiscal Year 2020 Managed Care Organization (MCO) contracts and request for proposal for managed care in the next budget biennium, inclusive of one MCO for foster children. This works pairs well and is timed with the decoupling efforts of the foster care rates reimbursed to private child-caring facilities and child-placing agencies.
- DCBS met with the Public Consulting Group, Inc. (PCG) on March 18th and 19th to discuss Title IV-E claiming and to identify gaps to inform a strategic plan, facilitating the state's forthcoming FFPSA implementation.
- DCBS is exploring services through Chapin Hall in the implementation of House Bill 1 study group recommendations on performance-based contracting.

From the Transition Aged Youth Workgroup

- The workgroup met on March 8, 2019. Members of the Voices of the Commonwealth have been onboarded to the workgroup to better inform the strategies and transformation effort.
- A new independent living curriculum has been developed and in the final process of approval for release.
- The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2019.

From the Foster Care and Adoption Workgroup

- DCBS continues to move towards implementation of a contract with the University of South Florida (USF) regarding a partnership opportunity to create and maintain a Kentucky (KY) Just In Time Training (JIT) website. This KY-JIT website would provide information and web-based training videos that would facilitate and support foster parents, relative caregivers, and birth parent learning strategies to improve their skills.
- DCBS is working with the Office of Administrative and Technology Services (OATS) and the Kentucky State Police (KSP) on interim and long-term solutions to expedite the process of background checks for prospective foster/adoptive parents.
- The next meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2019.
- Casey Family Programs has secured services through Kentucky Youth Advocates to bolster communications regarding the child welfare transformation efforts.

Additional Updates

- 922 KAR 1:050, State funded adoption assistance; 922 KAR 1:530, Post-adoption placement stabilization services; and 922 KAR 1:500, Educational and training vouchers, underwent their second legislative committee review and went into effect on March 13, 2019. These amendments clarify extraordinary medical services, the maximum adoption subsidy amount, renegotiations of adoption assistance for post-adoption stabilization services, and adjust the eligibility age from 23 to 26 years old to obtain an educational and training voucher (consistent with federal law).
- Emergency amendments were drafted for 922 KAR 1:310, Standards for child-placing agencies; 922 KAR 1:350, Requirements for public child welfare agency foster parents, adoptive parents, and respite care providers; and 922 KAR 1:495, Training requirements for foster parents, adoptive parents, and respite care providers for children in the custody of the cabinet. These amendments are scheduled to be filed and effective immediately on April 1, 2019. The amendments incorporate new federal model standards for foster homes and establish a new foster home type referred to as a "child specific foster home," which are designed for relative or fictive kin placements. The amendments include a different per diem for the new foster home type and ability to waive non-safety foster home standards on a case-by-case basis.
- DCBS met with private foster care providers to discuss diligent recruitment, progress on implementation of FFPSA, Building Bridges initiative, transitional services, and behavioral health screening and assessment on March 15.